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EXAMINER

KOPPIKAR, VIVEK D

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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/008,027	Applicant(s) MCEACHERN, J. EDWARD	
	Examiner VIVEK D. KOPPIKAR	Art Unit 3626	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).

Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 2/6/08.

2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.

3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-51 is/are pending in the application.

 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-51 is/are rejected.

7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:

1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application

6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-11, 14-36 and 38-51 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kraftson et al. (6,151,581; hereinafter Kraftson), in view of Joao (6,283,761; hereinafter Joao), in view of Siegrist, Jr. et al. (5,652,842; hereinafter Siegrist), and in view of Official Notice.

(A) As per currently amended claim 1, Kraftson discloses a system for collecting, processing, and presenting survey information comprising:

- (1) a survey communication system for connecting to survey participants for conducting a survey to obtain survey data, said survey communication system capable of executing software scripts for implementing desired automated survey routines (Kraftson: abstract; col. 21, lines 14-24; Fig. 1- 23);
- (2) a customer viewpoint module for providing software scripts to said survey communication system for surveying survey participants who are customers using a drill-down method, said survey data obtained from the customers including patient viewpoint data (Kraftson: abstract; col. 21, lines 14-24; Fig. 1-23);

(3) a personal clinical data analysis module for automatically generating analyzed data generated by analyzing said survey data, wherein said personal clinical data analysis module generates reports on said analyzed data for use by the survey consumer (Kraftson: abstract; col. 2, line 51-col. 3, line 7; Fig. 1-23);

(4) a viewpoint module for providing software scripts to said survey communication system for surveying survey participants and further for receiving said survey data from said survey communication system, said survey data obtained from the participants including viewpoint data (Kraftson: abstract; col. 21, lines 14-24; Fig. 1-23); and

Kraftson, however, fails to expressly disclosed system for collecting, processing, and presenting survey information comprising:

(5) an automated survey communication system [Emphasis added];

(6) an office team viewpoint module viewpoint module for providing software scripts to said survey communication system for surveying survey participants who are employees using a drill-down method, said survey data obtained from the employees including employee viewpoint data [Emphasis added];

(7) an office data presentation module for generating assessed survey information for presenting to end users in a formatted manner, said assessed survey information including information for providing quality assessments of an organization, wherein

(8) said drill-down method utilizes one or both of survey data already provided by a current

survey participant and historical survey data to determine a subsequent survey question to be asked of the current survey participant, and further wherein

(9) said system automatically displays survey results to each survey participant utilizing historical survey data, said displayed analyzed feedback formatted in a custom manner based on whether the current survey participant is a customer, or is an employee or a manager.

Nevertheless, these features are old and well known in the art, as evidenced by Joao and Siegrist. In particular, Joao and Siegrist disclose a system for collecting, processing, and presenting survey information comprising:

(5) an automated survey communication system (Joao: abstract; col. 2, lines 54-63; col. 4, lines 26-33; col. 7, lines 33-43; col. 19, lines 54-64; Fig. 1-15B);

(6) an office team viewpoint module viewpoint module for providing software scripts to said survey communication system for surveying survey participants who are employees using a drill-down method, said survey data obtained from the employees including employee viewpoint data (Joao: abstract; col. 2, lines 54-63; col. 4, lines 26-33; col. 7, lines 33-43; col. 19, lines 54-64; col. 41, line 55-col.43, line 29; Fig. 1-15B);

(7) an office data presentation module for generating assessed survey information for presenting to end users in a formatted manner, said assessed survey information including information for providing quality assessments of an organization (Siegrist: abstract; col. 1, lines 5-col. 2, line 61; Fig. 1-13f), wherein

(8) said drill-down method utilizes one or both of survey data already provided by a current

survey participant and historical survey data to determine a subsequent survey question to be asked of the current survey participant (Joao: col. 29, lines 15-39), and further wherein (9) said system automatically displays survey results to each survey participant utilizing historical survey data, said displayed analyzed feedback formatted in a custom manner based on whether the current survey participant is a customer, or is an employee or a manager (Joao: col. 4, lines 27-33; col. 19, lines 7-11 ; col. 20, lines 21-27).

One of ordinary skill in the art would have found it obvious at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of Joao with the combined teachings of Kraftson and Siegrist with the motivation of improving the quality of products or services rendered (Joao: col. 2, lines 46-54).

One of ordinary skill in the art would have found it obvious at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of Siegrist with the combined teachings of Kraftson and Joao with the motivation of improving the quality of products or services rendered (Kraftson: abstract).

The Office also notes that nonfunctional descriptive material will not distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art in terms of patentability. See *In re Nagi*, 367 F.3d 1336, 1339, 70 USPQ2d 1862, 1864 (Fed. Cir., 2004) (combining printed instructions and an old product into a kit will not render the claimed invention nonobvious even if the instructions detail a new use for the product); and *In re Gulack*, 703 F.2d 1381, 1385, 217 USPQ 401, 404 (Fed. Cir. 1983) (when descriptive material is not functionally related to the substrate, the descriptive material will not distinguish the invention from the prior art in terms of patentability). Common situations involving nonfunctional descriptive material are as follows: a computer that differs from the prior art solely with respect to nonfunctional descriptive material that cannot alter how the

machine functions (i.e., the descriptive material does not reconfigure the computer); a process that differs from the prior art only with respect to nonfunctional descriptive material that cannot alter how the process steps are to be performed to achieve the utility of the invention; and a computer-readable storage medium that differs from the prior art solely with respect to nonfunctional descriptive material, such as music or a literary work, encoded on the medium. See MPEP § 2106. As such, nonfunctional descriptive material found in claims 1-33 (e.g., practice data, historical performance normative data, pathophysiologic normative data, various customer viewpoint data, various employee viewpoint data, various team function data, various fiscal performance data, etc.) will not distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art (e.g., Kraftson, Joao, Siegrist, etc.) in terms of patentability.

(B) As per original claim 2, Kraftson discloses the system according to claim 1 wherein said generating assessed survey information for presenting to end users in a formatted manner utilizes a compass viewpoint information presentation paradigm (Kraftson: abstract; col. 2, line 51-co1.3, line 7; col. 17, lines 11-27; Fig. 1-23).

(C) As per original claim 3, Kraftson discloses the system according to claim 1 applied to a medical care provider, wherein said customer is a patient, said system further comprising:

(1) a comparative practice data repository for storing and retrieving said survey data and for storing and retrieving said analyzed data and for storing and retrieving said assessed survey information (Kraftson: abstract; col. 4, line 59-co1.5, lines 62; col. 10, line 31; Fig. 1-23);

(2) a historical data repository on clinic performance for storing fiscal historical performance normative data for use by said office data presentation module for generating and displaying

historical fiscal performance comparisons for predicting fiscal success (Kraftson: abstract; col. 4, line 59-co1.5, lines 62; col. 10, line 31; Fig. 1-23); and

(3) a clinical and pathophysiologic normative data repository for storing clinical and pathophysiologic normative data obtained from various sources, said clinical and pathophysiologic normative data relating patient parameters including age, gender, and medical conditions (Kraftson: abstract; col. 2, lines 51-co1.3, line 7; col. 4, line 58-co1.5, line 63; Fig. 1-23). The Office also notes that nonfunctional descriptive material will not distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art in terms of patentability, as discussed in section 3. (A), supra.

(D) As per original claim 4, Kraftson discloses the system according to claim 3 wherein said customer viewpoint data includes:

- (1) customer satisfaction data;
- (2) office process viewpoint data;
- (3) provider care and concern data; and
- (4) verbatim viewpoint comments (Kraftson: abstract; col. 2, lines 51-co1.3, line 7; col. 4, line 58-co1.5, line 63; Fig. 1-23).

As per the further recitations expanding, inter alia, "employee viewpoint data," "job performance data," "team function data," "employee function data," and "fiscal performance data," it is respectfully submitted that the technique of using various data, culled from the immense variety of ubiquitous sources, for analysis purposes is well known and obvious. One of ordinary skill in the art would have found it obvious at the time of the invention to incorporate these data with the motivation of improving the quality of products or services rendered (Kraftson: abstract).

The Office also notes that nonfunctional descriptive material will not distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art in terms of patentability, as discussed in section 3. (A), *supra*.

(E) As per original claim 5, Kraftson discloses the system according to claim 4 wherein said analyzed data includes:

- (1) a comparative patient level data for storing in said clinical and pathophysiological normative data repository, said comparative patient level data (Kraftson: abstract; col. 2, lines 51-col. 3, line 7; col. 4, line 58-col. 5, line 63; Fig. 1-23) including:
 - (a) patient age data;
 - (b) patient gender data;
 - (c) patient functional health status data;
 - (d) patient health screening data;
 - (e) patient family medical history data;
 - (f) patient medication data;
 - (g) patient pathophysiology data; (h) patient health habits data; (i) patient counseling data; (j) patient satisfaction data;
 - (k) patient health care access data; and
- (l) patient payment capability data (Kraftson: abstract; col. 2, lines 51- .col. 3, line 7; col. 4, line 58-col.5, line 63; Fig. 1-23);
- (2) comparative data for stored in said comparative practice data repository (Kraftson: abstract; col. 2, lines 51-col. 3, line 7; col. 4, line 58-col. 5, line 63; Fig. 1-23); and
- (3) analyzed data stored in said comparative practice data repository

(Kraftson: abstract; col. 2, lines 51-col. 3, line 7; col. 4, line 58-col. 5, line 63; Fig. 1-23).

The Office also notes that nonfunctional descriptive material will not distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art in terms of patentability, as discussed in section 3. (A), supra.

(F) As per original claim 6, Kraftson discloses the system according to claim 5 wherein said assessed survey information includes:

(1) patient viewpoint results including:

(a) office process viewpoints;

(b) provider care and concern viewpoints;

(c) overall visit viewpoints; and

(d) verbatim comments on processes (Kraftson: abstract; col. 2, lines 51-col.3, line 7; col. 4, line 58-col. 5, line 63; Fig. 1-23).

As per the further recitations regarding, inter alia, "functional health status results" and "fiscal performance viewpoint results," it is respectfully submitted that the technique of using various data, culled from the immense variety of ubiquitous sources, for analysis purposes is well known and obvious. One of ordinary skill in the art would have found it obvious at the time of the invention to incorporate these data with the motivation of improving the quality of products or services rendered (Kraftson: abstract).

The Office also notes that nonfunctional descriptive material will not distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art in terms of patentability, as discussed in section 3. (A), supra.

(G) Original claim 7 substantially repeats the same limitations of claim 5 and is therefore, rejected for the same reasons given for claim 5 and incorporated herein.

(H) Original claims 8 and 9 substantially repeat the same limitations of claims 6 and are therefore rejected for the same reasons given for claim 6 and incorporated herein.

(I) As per original claim 10, Kraftson fails to expressly disclose the system according to claim 1 applied to a medical care provider wherein said customer is a patient and further wherein said analyzed data includes:

- (1) patient family and social histories; (2) reviews of health habits; (3) health concerns; (4) medication reviews;
- (5) health screening information; and
- (6) recommendations based on nationally accepted guidelines, age, gender, and condition specific care.

Nevertheless, these features are old and well known in the art, as evidenced by Joao. In particular, Joao discloses the system according to claim 1 applied to a medical care provider wherein said customer is a patient and further wherein said analyzed data includes:

- (1) patient family and social histories; (2) reviews of health habits; (3) health concerns; (4) medication reviews;
- (5) health screening information; and
- (6) recommendations based on nationally accepted guidelines, age, gender, and condition specific care (Joao: abstract; col. 41, line 55-col. 43, line 29; col. 16, line 33-col. 20, line 30; Fig. 1-15B).

One of ordinary skill in the art would have found it obvious at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of Joao with the combined teachings of Kraftson and Siegrist with the motivation of improving the quality of products or services rendered (Joa0: col. 2, lines

46-54). The Office also notes that nonfunctional descriptive material will not distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art in terms of patentability, as discussed in section 3. (A), *supra*.

(J) Claims 11, 14 and 15-34 substantially repeat the same limitations as claims 1-11 and therefore, are rejected for the same reasons given for those claims and incorporated herein.

(K) As per claims 35 and 36, The Office takes Official Notice of the following techniques: (1) displaying/presenting assessed survey information in real time or near real time from a collection of survey data; (2) generating reports; and (3) displaying/presenting assessed survey information in seconds. The Office notes that the exigencies of commercial globalization and the advent of modern technologies, such as the Internet, have fostered a world where rapid accumulation, processing, analysis, and dissemination of voluminous information are not only expected, but also vital. Online consumer survey polls and real-time election voting polls are but two examples where the aforementioned techniques are employed. Whether via newspapers, television, radio and/or the Internet, the techniques of displaying/presenting assessed survey information in real time or near real time from a collection of survey data; generating reports; and displaying/presenting assessed survey information in seconds.

As such, The Office respectfully submits that the features of claim 35-36 are old and notoriously well known. Moreover, The Office submits that these features were developed and widely used well prior to Applicant's claimed invention. One of ordinary skill in the art would have found it obvious at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of Joao with the combined teachings of Kraftson and Siegrist with the motivation of processing survey information faster and more effectively.

(L) Claims 39-40, 41-41,43-44, 45-50 substantially repeat the same limitations as those given in claims 35-36 and therefore, are rejected for the same reasons given for those claims and incorporated herein.

(M) Claim 51 substantially repeats the same limitations as those given in claims 1-11 and therefore, is rejected for the same reasons given for those claims and incorporated herein

6. Claims 12-13 and 37-38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kraftson, Joao and Siegrist as applied to claims 1-11 and 14-33 above, and further in view of Plantec et al. (6,826,540; hereinafter Plantec).

(A) As per original claim 12, Kraftson fails to expressly disclose a system for collecting, processing, and presenting survey information for a medical care provider comprising: an interactive voice recognition module.

Nevertheless, this feature is old and well known in the art, as evidenced by Plantec. In particular, Plantec discloses a system for collecting, processing, and presenting survey information for a medical care provider comprising: an interactive voice recognition module (Plantec: abstract; col. 3, line 65-co1.4, line 1; Fig. 2). One of ordinary skill in the art would have found it obvious at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of Plantec with the combined teachings of Kraftson, Joao and Siegrist with the motivation of automating the collection of survey data (Plantec: abstract).

The remainder of claim 12 substantially repeats the same limitations as claims 1- 11 and is therefore, rejected for the same reasons given for those claims and incorporated herein.

(B) Original claim 13 substantially repeats the same limitations as claim 2 and is therefore, rejected for the same reasons given for claim 2 and incorporated herein.

(C) Claims 37-38 substantially repeat the same limitations as those given in claims 35-36 and therefore, are rejected for the same reasons given for those claims and incorporated herein.

Response to Arguments

7. Applicant's arguments filed on February 6, 2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. The applicant's arguments will be addressed in sequential order as they were set forth in the "Arguments/Remarks" section filed on February 6, 2008.

(1) Applicants argue that none of the references teach or suggest that historical survey data is used to display survey results to the survey participant, where the material is formatted in a custom matter based on whether the participant is a customer or an employee. However, as set forth above, the Joao reference teaches this feature (Joao: Col. 4, Ln. 27-33; Col. 19, Ln. 7-11 and Col. 20, Ln. 21-27). Specifically, Joao in Column 19, Lines 7-11 discloses restricting access to certain portions of the database based on the group that the user belongs. The Office interprets this feature as being equivalent to material being formatted in a custom manner based on whether the participant is a customer (patient) or an employee or a manager (provider).

(2) Applicants argue that none of the limitations in the claims are "non-functional descriptive material". The Office would like to note, however, that the merits of this argument do not have to be reached because the prior art of record clearly discloses all the claimed limitations and this is set forth above in the 35 U.S.C. 103(a) rejections of the claims.

Conclusion

8. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the the Office should be directed to Vivek Koppikar whose telephone number is (571)272-8117. He can normally be reached on M-F 8:00 am - 4:30 pm. If attempts to reach the Mr. Koppikar by telephone are unsuccessful, the M. Koppikar's supervisor, Joseph Thomas can be reached on (571)272-6776. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions

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on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Vivek D Koppikar/
Examiner, Art Unit 3626

/Robert Morgan/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3626